

Profile and correlates of colorimetric reagent kit use among people who use ecstasy/MDMA and other illegal stimulants in Australia, 2019-2021

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BACKGROUND

Colorimetric reagent test kits (CRTK) can provide information about the presence or absence of a nominated substance in drug samples.

In Australia there is a lack of permanent government-sanctioned drug checking services.

We aimed to identify patterns and correlates of CRTK use, as well as behavioural outcomes of testing, among people who use illegal stimulants.

METHODS

Australians living in capital cities who reported using MDMA and/or other illegal stimulants at ≥ 6 times in the past 6 months were interviewed in 2019-2021 about testing the contents and/or purity of illegal drugs, and features of last CRTK use (N=2195 after 170 repeat participants removed).

Logistic regression identified correlates of last using a testing kit.

People who use illegal stimulants seek information about the contents of their drugs and engage in drug checking practices.

MAIN FINDINGS

34% of the sample reported testing drug contents in the last year, the majority of whom (82%) used a CRTK.



After adjusting, we found that those who reported CRTK use were more likely to be male and under 25 years old. They were also more likely to have used LSD and novel psychoactive drugs in the last 6 months and to have reported past month drug dealing.

49% of those who used CRTK tested a drug bought as MDMA, 83% of whom detected MDMA.

Of those who tested and detected MDMA, most reported their findings, either to friends (88%), or their dealer (67%).

Most (89%) of those who tested and detected MDMA used the tested drug.

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